

An account of
the Hospital
for the
maintenance
and ...

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GENERAL COMMITTEE.

Wednesday, January 13, 1796.

RESOLVED,

THAT the Treasurer be desired to bring down and state the Account of the Charity to the present Day, and print copies of it, with the Charter, A& of Parliament, Bye-Laws and Regulations, for the general Committee.

(Extract from the Minutes.)

T. Merryweather, Sec.

A N
A C C O U N T
OF THE
H O S P I T A L
FOR THE
Maintenance *and* Education
OF
EXPOSED *and* DESERTED
Y O U N G C H I L D R E N.

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A C C O U N T

OF THE

FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

IN the course of an arrangement of the by-laws and regulations of the Foundling Hospital, and of the previous reference to the minutes of the general Courts and Committees from the commencement of the Charity, the following detail has presented itself of the principal occurrences relating to the establishment; a detail, consisting originally of a few separate minutes, but afterwards, in its progress, appearing an useful, if not a necessary comment, explanatory of the circumstances under which those laws and regulations were originally made; and promising considerable assistance to the labours of those, who devote

a portion of their time and attention to the conduct of the charity. It has in consequence been formed into a narrative, or (if it may merit the name) history of the rise and progress of the Foundling Hospital.

The English nation possesses so distinguished a pre-eminence in every act of benevolence, that it appears scarcely credible that there should have been a period, when hospitals, for the preservation of exposed and deserted infants, had been opened at Paris, Madrid, Lisbon, Rome, Venice and Amsterdam, and no charity of that kind existing in England. In the reign of Queen Anne a scheme of this nature had been projected, but for want of exertion it had not succeeded. In consequence however of the subject having been agitated, some persons had by their wills given considerable legacies for the benefit of a Foundling Hospital, whenever it should be established.

In 1713, Mr. Addison, in one of his periodical * essays, directed the public attention again to the subject. "I will mention" (says he) "a piece of charity which has not yet

* See No. 105 of the *Guardian.*

" been

“ been exerted among us and which deserves
“ our attention the more, because it is prac-
“ tised by most of the nations about us. I
“ mean a provision for foundlings, or for
“ those children who, through want of such
“ a provision, are exposed to the barbarity of
“ cruel and unnatural parents. One does not
“ know how to speak on such a subject with-
“ out horror; but what multitudes of infants
“ have been made away with by those who brought
“ them into the world, and were afterwards
“ ashamed or unable to provide for them!

“ There is scarce an assizes where some un-
“ happy wretch is not executed for the murder
“ of a child. And how many more of those
“ monsters of inhumanity may we suppose to
“ be wholly undiscovered, or cleared for want
“ of legal evidence? Not to mention those,
“ who by unnatural practices do in some mea-
“ sure defeat the intentions of providence, and
“ destroy their conceptions even before they
“ see the light. In all these the guilt is equal,
“ though the punishment is not so. But, to
“ pass by the greatness of the crime (which
“ is not to be expressed by words) if we only
“ consider how it robs the commonwealth of
“ its full number of citizens, it certainly de-

“ serves the utmost application and wisdom of
“ a people to prevent it.

“ It is certain, that which generally betrays
“ these profligate women into it, and over-
“ comes the tenderness which is natural to
“ them on other occasions, is the fear of shame,
“ or their inability to support those whom
“ they give life to. I shall therefore shew how
“ this evil is prevented in other countries, as I
“ have learnt from those who have been conver-
“ tant in the several great cities in Europe.”—
He then proceeds to explain the manner, in
which similar charities in Europe had been
conducted; an account which is omitted here,
as the subject will be referred to in a subsequent
part of this detail.

It was near ten years after, that Mr. Thomas Coram, a master of a trading vessel to the American colonies, a man singularly endowed with active and disinterested benevolence, undertook and, after a labour of 17 years, succeeded in the establishment of the Foundling Hospital. Before he presented his petition to the King, he was advised to procure a recommendation of the design; and he succeeded in

obtaining a * memorial signed by some Ladies of rank, and another by several Noblemen

* The following is a Copy of it.

“ Whereas among the many excellent designs and
“ institutions of Charity, which this nation, and
“ especially the city of *London*, has hitherto en-
“ couraged and established, no expedient has yet been
“ found out, for preventing the frequent murders of
“ poor miserable infants at their birth; or for sup-
“ pressing the inhuman custom of exposing new born
“ infants to perish in the Streets; or the putting out
“ such unhappy Foundlings to wicked and barbarous
“ nurses, who undertaking to bring them up for a
“ small and trifling sum of money, do often suffer
“ them to starve for want of due sustenance or care;
“ or, if permitted to live, either turn them into the
“ Streets to beg or steal, or hire them out to loose
“ persons, by whom they are trained up in that in-
“ famous way of living; and sometimes are blinded,
“ or maimed and distorted in their limbs, in order to
“ move pity and compassion, and thereby become fit-
“ ter instruments of gain to those vile mercileſs
“ wretches.

“ For a beginning to redress so deplorable a grie-
“ vance, and to prevent as well the effusion of so much
“ innocent blood, as the fatal consequences of that
“ idleness, beggary, or stealing, in which such poor
“ Foundlings are generally bred up; and to enable
“ them, by an early and effectual care of their edu-
“ cation, to become useful members of the common-
“ wealth, We whose names are under written, be-
“ ing

men and Gentlemen; both of which were annexed to his petition to the King; who on the

17th

“ ing deeply touched with compassion for the sufferings and lamentable condition of such poor abandoned helpless infants, as well as the enormous abuses and mischiefs to which they are exposed, and in order to supply the government plentifully with useful hands on many occasions; and for the better producing good and faithful servants from amongst the poor and miserable cast-off children or Foundlings, now a pest to the public, and a chargeable nuisance within the bills of mortality; and for settling a yearly income for their maintenance and proper education, till they come to a fit age for service; are desirous to encourage, and willing to contribute towards erecting an Hospital for infants, whom their parents are not able to maintain, and who have no right to any parish; which we conceive will not only prevent many horrid murders, cruelties and other mischiefs, and be greatly beneficial to the publick; but will also be acceptable to God Almighty, as being the only remedy of such great evils, which have been so long neglected, tho' always complained of; provided due and proper care be taken for setting on foot so necessary an establishment, and a Royal Charter be granted by the King to such persons, as his Majesty shall approve of, who shall be willing to become benefactors for the erecting and endowing such an Hospital, and for the receiving the voluntary contributions of charitable and well disposed persons

17th day of October 1739, granted his Charter to the Governors and Guardians of the Foundling Hospital; constituting them a corporate body; authorizing the purchase of real estates not exceeding £.4000 a year; and appointing Courts, (at which the presence of 13 Governors at least should be required) for the election of Committees, a President, and other Officers, and for the general acts of the Corporation.

It may be necessary to shew how far the Foundling Hospital differs from all foreign charities

“ persons, and for directing and managing the affairs
“ thereof gratis, to the best advantage; under such
“ regulations as his Majesty in his great wisdom
“ shall judge most proper for attaining the desired
“ effect of our good Intentions.”

Charlotte Somerset.

S. Richmond.

H. Bolton.

Anne Bolton.

J. Leeds.

A. Bedford.

M. Cavendish Portland.

J. Manchester.

F. Hartford.

M. Harold.

S. Huntingdon.

F. Wa. and Nottingham.

E. Cardigan.

Dorothy Burlington.

F. Litchfield.

A. Albemarle.

F. Biron.

A. Trevor.

A. Torrington.

E. Onslow.

A. King.

for foundlings; and to explain why a limited establishment of this kind is proper in England although the system of general reception is rendered unnecessary, by the institution of our poor laws.—The existence of such a code, and the establishment of a permanent and certain provision for the aged and indigent, not of occasional bounty but of uncontrovertible right, and the anxious care which has watched, though not with equal success, over every abuse or neglect in the execution of them, may be placed in competition with the greatest of our national achievements. To those however who have paid much attention to the execution of those laws, it must have occurred that there are some cases in which, from the necessary imperfection of all human establishments, the remedy is rendered very inadequate: such as, among others, in the instance of those unhappy females, who by broken faith, by unprincipled seduction, or by some unfortunate circumstance, are placed in a situation, where indigence and excess of bodily pain are aggravated by the prospect of hopeless contumely and irretrievable disgrace; and who have sometimes been driven to a crime, which no mother could ever

ever have imagined, who was not first reduced to the extreme of agony and despair.

These are the cases, for which the benefit of this Charity was peculiarly intended; and in such a city as London there always will be some instances, in which the existence of the child, and the future welfare and good conduct of the mother, can only be secured by such an establishment, as that of the Foundling Hospital. There are others, in which the single object is the preservation of the child; such as that of a poor wife or widow dying in child-bed, or soon after; leaving the preservation of her infant, to depend upon the care of a parish work-house.

The selection of these cases, with a competent attention to circumstances, has been deemed one of the most important duties of the acting Guardians of the Charity. In this respect the Foundling differs from all other Hospitals, where the Law has not appointed any peculiar provision for the poor. Theirs are necessarily open and universal: ours, except during a short period, when the system was totally and very improperly changed, extended only to those cases,

cases, where the poor laws do not afford competent relief.—

The first general Court of the new Corporation was held at Somerset-house, on the 20th of November 1739; the chairman being the Duke of Bedford, who, for a period of above 30 years, continued to be President of the Hospital, until his death in 1771. At this Court the Corporation proceeded to the election of a Committee of fifty Governors (including the President, Vice-presidents and Treasurer) to manage the estate and effects of the Hospital for the ensuing year.

The Governors immediately instituted an enquiry respecting legacies and benefactions; and opened books for subscriptions and annual payments, affording by their own donations a liberal example to others. Accounts of the institutions and regulations of similar * Charities abroad were immediately applied for, and obtained; and a regular system was prepared for

* The account obtained some years after, in 1750, by Mr. Whatley, of the Hospital at Paris, is inserted in the Supplement, No. 1.

for the arrangement and government of the Hospital.

In the general Court, held immediately after Christmas-day 1739, a proposal was made for taking a 21 years lease of Montagu-house, for the use of the Charity: but some difficulties arising from the nature of the Duke's estate in it, Ranelagh-house, Strafford-house, Essex-house and several other situations were successively in contemplation. In the mean time the Governors had engaged some tenements in Hatton Garden for the temporary accommodation of the Charity; and the admission of Children to the benefit of the institution commenced on the 25th of March 1741.

To increase and perpetuate the funds of the Charity was, at a very early period, the object of very strenuous exertions, of the most active Governors and Benefactors; among which we may distinguish the names of Mr. Coram, Mr. Martin Folkes, Mr. Taylor White and Mr. Hume * Campbell. A Plan, not perfectly

free

* The second brother of the late Earl of Marchmont.—It is a singularly favourable circumstance to the

free from interested motives, was at that time presented to the Corporation; by which it was proposed to enrich the Hospital with perpetual and ample revenues, to add a fund of £.30,000 for the purposes of building, and to give the Charity the indefeasible possession of a noble estate; for all which benefits the projector asked only a participation of profits; which, though not exceeding 3 per cent. was to have produced a very sufficient reward for his speculations. The Committee enquired into the nature of the first of his five proposed resources. This proved to be a tax *to be* imposed by Parliament on all coals exported from Great-Britain; a tax which the Corporation not having any pretence for asking, or probability of obtaining, he received thanks and praise; and there the dream of wealth ended.

In the ensuing session the Governors applied for and obtained an Act of Parliament confirming

the Charity that that care, which fostered the infant Establishment in 1743, should, after an uninterrupted period of 52 years, be now continued by his elder Brother's Widow, Lady Marchmont; who is at present so kind as to act, as an Inspectress of the Foundling Children, in the neighbourhood of Hemel Hempstead.

ing their Charter with the addition of some further powers, and the exemption of the Hospital from parochial jurisdiction and interference. A special Committee was appointed to prepare by-laws, and the general Committee was directed to consider of a plan for the further execution of the charity, and of the purchase of land as an investment of part of the money of the Corporation. Circular letters were in the mean time distributed about the kingdom, soliciting information with regard to the management of the Hospital, and particularly where nurses might be procured, and children well taken care of, at the most reasonable prices.

The securing of an healthy and convenient scite to the Hospital, was a subject, to which the Governors had paid an early attention. In October 1740 the Committee had been authorized, to purchase of the Earl of Salisbury, the two fields on the northern side of Great Ormond-street; the situation appearing to be extremely eligible for the Charity. His Lordship declined treating, unless all his land there, extending to Gray's-Inn-Lane, was included in the purchase; and named as a price for the whole, what his agent stated to have been already

ready offered, the sum of £.7000. Difficulties however arising, on the part of the Hospital, with respect to the amount of the sum, the Earl very liberally obviated them, by a donation of £.500 towards the purchase; reducing it thereby to £.6500. The general Court immediately accepted the offer, and gave orders for a completion of the contract.

In May 1741, the general Committee appointed a special Committee of accounts, " to see that the accounts, of the receipts and payments for the Hospital, be kept agreeable to the plan approved of at the last general Meeting; to examine the Secretary's, Steward's, and Inspector's Accounts, and the several bills delivered to the Corporation; and to lay the same from time to time before the Committee, in order to their being allowed and paid." The propriety of this appointment requires no comment: It has very lately been renewed, after many years discontinuance, occasioned probably by the difficulty of getting gentlemen to attend. The same cause applying, in some degree, to the general Committee, an order was made at this time, for summoning it, for alternate wednesdays only. Some arrangement

arrangement of this * nature, to secure a regular and full attendance, might, with the aid and co-operation of the sub-committees, prove a considerable benefit and convenience to the charity.

It being at first thought impracticable to procure a sufficient number of healthy wet-nurses, an endeavour was made to bring up some of the children by hand; but experience being very strong against this practice, and as decisive in favor of the infants being nursed in the country, the Committee came to a resolution to send all the children, which should be taken in, as soon as possible, into the country, to remain there until three years old; and as to infants, to be nursed by wet-nurses only.

The land purchased of Lord Salisbury appeared so desirable a situation for the Hospital,

* Perhaps a reference to the first wednesday in the month, for all the general business, except the petitions for the admission of children (those being to be decided upon only on the third wednesday, the cases being previously enquired into under the direction of the sub committee) would be a successful mode of procuring a full attendance on those two days: no general Committee being, in that case, to be held on any other wednesday, without a special summons.

tal, and benefactions for the intended building flowed in with so liberal a current, that the Corporation very speedily took into consideration the erection of an Hospital on their new estate; and on the 16th day of September 1742, the foundation stone of the western wing was laid, and building begun, upon a design prepared by Mr. Jacobsen, one of the Governors and benefactors to the charity; the estimate of it amounting to £.6555 17s. 1d. A building Committee was at the same time appointed for the purpose of conducting the building.

In the ensuing spring, was the first anniversary dinner of the Governors; a meeting that has since continued with much benefit to the Charity.—The plenty, that distinguished the annual feast, could hardly exceed that of the table of diet for the Hospital, which, by the over kindness and English feelings of the general Committee, had then been established, and which continued for some years. It is copied in a* note.

The

* General Committee, 11 March 1740.

Resolved,

That the diet to be used in this Hospital shall be as follows: Upon Sundays, roast beef; Mondays, stewed beef

present weekly allowance of animal food in the Hospital, which has by experience been found sufficient, is not much more than one fourth of what was then ordered.

The western wing of the new Hospital was finished, and the houses in Hatton-Garden given up, in October 1745. In March 1746, a subscription was opened, for the building of the chapel; and, the next year, the general Committee was authorized to contract for the immediate erection of it; upon a plan presented by Mr. Jacobsen; the estimate of which was * £.4195 17s. 4d. And in 1749 (at the instance of Mr. Emerson, one of the Governors

beef with turnips and carrots; Tuesdays, roast mutton; Wednesdays, boiled beef with greens or roots; Thursdays, stewed beef with turnips and carrots; Fridays, roast mutton, and Saturdays boiled beef with greens or roots, or pork with pease pudding in winter, and shoulders of veal in summer: And that the proportion of the said diet be at present regulated at a pound for each head a day one with another.

* It cost in the whole 6490 £. being less than the amount of the subscriptions received towards it.

B

who

who afterwards bequeathed to the Hospital the residue of his estates, amounting to upwards of £.11,000) the general Committee, in order that the girls might be kept separate from the boys, was authorized to proceed to the building of the eastern wing; which, together with the treasurer's house, appears to have been ready for habitation in 1752.

The whole of the building, originally calculated to hold 400 children, was intended to be plain and devoid of decoration; but the talents and public spirit of several artists benevolently varied the intention; and many ornaments were presented by them to the Charity. To Mr. Hogarth, who was an active Governor and an early benefactor, the Hospital is indebted for three pictures; one his march to Finchley, which, in the opinion of some judges, stands first in the catalogue of his works; and another, the portrait of our excellent founder Mr. Coram; an excellent and well painted picture. A list and description of these donations, taken from the original printed

account

account of the Hospital is inserted in a
* note.

B 2

The

* In the court room were placed four capital pictures; the subjects being parts of the sacred history, suitable to the place for which they were designed.

The first painted by Mr. *Hayman*, and taken from the 2d chapter of *Exodus* ver. 8, 9. the words of which are, “ The maid went and called the child’s “ mother, and Pharoah’s daughter said unto her, take “ this child away and nurse it for me, and I will “ give you wages.”

The ensuing verse is the subject of the next picture, viz: “ And the child grew and she brought him to “ Pharoah’s daughter, and he became her son, and she “ called his name *Moses*.” This picture is painted by Mr. *Hogarth*.

The third picture is the history of *Ishmael*, painted by Mr. *Highmore*. The subject taken from the 21st chapter of *Genesis* ver. 17. “ And the angel of the “ Lord called to *Hagar* out of heaven, and said to “ her, what aileth thee *Hagar*? Fear not, for God “ hath heard the voice of the lad where he is!”

The fourth picture was painted by Mr. *Willes*, its subject taken from the 18th chapter of *Luke*, ver. 16. “ Jesus said, suffer little children to come “ unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is “ the kingdom of God.” On each side of these pictures are placed smaller pictures in circular frames, representing the most considerable hospitals in and about London.

1. The

The Charity is not under less obligation to the benevolence of Mr. Handel; who upon the

1. The view of the hospital for exposed children.
2. The view of the hospital at *Hyde-park Corner*, called *St. George's* hospital. These two by Mr. *Wilson*.
3. The view of *Chelsea* hospital.
4. The view of *Bethlem* hospital. These two by Mr. *Haytley*.
5. The view of *St. Thomas's* hospital.
6. The view of *Greenwich* hospital.
7. The view of the *Blue-Coat* hospital. These three by Mr. *Whale*.
8. The view of *Sutton's* hospital, called the *Charter-House*. By Mr. *Gainsborough*.

Over the chimney is placed a very curious bas-relief, carved by Mr. *Rybrack*, and presented by him, representing children employed in navigation and husbandry; being the employments, to which the children of this hospital are destined.

The other ornaments of the room were also given by several ingenious workmen, who had been employed in building the hospital, and were desirous to contribute to its embellishment.

The stucco work was given by Mr. *William Wilton*. The marble chimney by Mr. *Deval*. The table with its frame enriched with carving, by Mr. *John Sander-
son*; and the glass by Mr. *Hallet*.

In the other rooms of the hospital are the following pictures. His most sacred Majesty King *George the Second*, *Patron of this Hospital*, by Mr. *Shakleton*, painter to his Majesty. The right ho-
norable

the building of the Chapel gave the Hospital the benefit of his oratorio of the Messiah, and conducted the performance himself. This he repeated for several years, with an advantage to the funds of the Charity, amounting, in the whole, to upwards of £.6000; and at his death, in 1759, bequeathed his property in the music of that oratorio to the Hospital.

In March 1751, Mr. Coram, the benevolent founder of the Hospital, died, in the 84th year of his age. In consequence of a wish, expressed in his life-time, he was interred under the Chapel, in the midst of that Charity which he had founded; a monument more noble and dignified than ever wealth or pride obtained. His funeral was attended with every honourable

nor able the Earl of Dartmouth, one of the vice-presidents of this hospital, by Reynolds. *Taylor White* Esq; treasurer of this hospital, in crayons, by Mr. Coates. Mr. Thomas Coram, and the march of the guards to Finchley, by Mr. Hogarth; Mr. Milner and Mr. Jacob-son, by Mr. Hudson; Dr. Mead, by Mr. Ramsay; Mr. Emerson by Mr. Highmore; Francis Fauquier Esq; lieutenant governor of Virginia, by Mr. Wilson. A large sea piece by Mr. Brooking; and a fine landscape by Mr. Lambert.

able respect by the Governors of the Hospital, preceded by the children and their nurses; and the choir service was performed by gentlemen of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. His life had been so totally devoid of self interest, that he left behind him property hardly sufficient to have discharged the expences of his funeral. The Foundling Hospital had not been the only object of his exertions: He was an active contributor to the establishment of the new colonies of Georgia and Nova Scotia; and made some progress in the foundation of a school for the education of Indian girls. An * inscription to his memory

was

* The following is a copy of it.

CAPTAIN THOMAS CORAM,
 whose name will never want a monument,
 so long as this Hospital shall subsist,
 was born in the year 1688;
 a man eminent in that most eminent virtue,
 the love of mankind:
 little attentive to his private fortune,
 and refusing many opportunities of increasing it,
 his time and thoughts were continually employed
 in endeavours to promote the public happiness,
 both in this kingdom, and elsewhere;
 particularly in the colonies of North America;
 and his endeavours were many times crowned
 with the desired success.

His

was placed in the centre of the southern arcade of the Chapel ; which, having been originally in wood, and decayed by time, has been very recently replaced in stone.

The number of children received into the Hospital, before the end of the year 1752 was 1040 ; of which 559 were then maintained by the Hospital, at an expence, as is stated in the minutes

His unwearied solicitation for above seventeen years together, (which would have baffled the patience and industry of any man less zealous in doing good) and his application to persons of distinction of both sexes, obtained at length the Charter of the Corporation, (bearing date the 17th of October 1739) for the maintenance and education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children, by which many thousand of lives may be preserved to the public and employed in a frugal and honest course of industry ; He died the 29th of March 1751, in the 84th year of his age ; poor in worldly estate, rich in good works ; and was buried at his own desire, in the vault underneath this chapel (the first there deposited) at the east end thereof ; many of the governors and other gentlemen attending the funeral to do honour to his memory.

R E A D E R,

Thy actions will shew whether thou art sincere, in the praises thou mayst bestow on him ; and if thou hast virtue enough to commend his virtues, forget not to add also the imitation of them.

minutes of the general Court of 27th June 1753, of upwards of £5000 a year; to which the permanent income of the Hospital, which did not then exceed * £1050 a year, bore no proportion. A reduction was therefore proposed in the number of children: This however does not appear to have taken place, as in the year 1754, we find that there were 600 † children then on the establishment. The zeal of the acting Guardians of the Hospital, and their desire of making it at that early period extensively useful, seems to have carried them rather too far; and to have induced them, by premature exertions, to risque imprudently the permanent welfare of the institution. Mere strangers however cannot be fully aware of the powerful inducements, which they had to extend as far as possible the benefits of the Charity;

* See a general statement of the receipts and payments of the charity to the end of the year 1752, No. 2, in the supplement.

† The morning and evening prayers, prepared by a clergyman, for the use of the children, and the instructions drawn up by Mr. Whatley at this time, to be given to children, on their being apprenticed, are thought deserving of a place in the supplement, See No. 3.

Charity ; as the value and consequence of those benefits can only be correctly appreciated by those, who have *personally* assisted in the execution of the Charity.

In March 1756 the Governors presented a petition to the House of Commons, stating the incorporation and parliamentary confirmation of the Charity ; and the manner in which the petitioners had proceeded in execution of the trust reposed in them ; that they had educated the children under their care with the utmost frugality ; and in such a manner as that they might become useful servants of the public : that they had expended great sums of money ; and at the same time, from the insufficiency of their income, had been compelled, to their great concern and to the detriment of the public, to reject many proper objects of the Charity : that from the different accounts received from foreign countries, where charities of the like kind are established, it appeared that the expences of those establishments could not be maintained merely by private donations ; and that they have therefore constantly had the aid of the public. Upon these grounds they prayed the house, to take such measures for

for the extension and support of the Charity, as should be deemed wise and proper.

The House of Commons * voted the petitioners the sum of £.10,000; accompanied with a condition for the reception of all children; that should be offered under a certain age; an age which the Corporation first fixed at two, then at six, and afterwards at twelve months. The gates of the Charity were immediately thrown open for all children not exceeding the then proposed age of two months; and on the 2d of June 1756, the first day of general reception,

* The following were the previous resolutions of the House of Commons; 6 April 1756.

“ That the enabling the Hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children to receive all the children that shall be offered, is the only method to render that charitable institution of lasting and general utility.

“ That to render the said Hospital of lasting and general utility the assistance of Parliament is necessary.

“ That to render the said Hospital of general utility and effect, it should be enabled to appoint proper places in all counties, ridings or divisions of this kingdom, for the reception of all exposed and deserted young children.”

ception, 117 children were received. From that time to the 31st of December 1757, five thousand five hundred and ten children were admitted into the Hospital.

The Charity obtained the splendid name of a national establishment. The King had declared himself its patron. Large sums of money were annually granted to the Corporation; and the number of children, of an infantine and helpless age, supported by the Hospital, was, in 1760, increased to above 6000; a number, which, at the rate of £.7 10s. each, required an income of above £45,000 a year to maintain; and which must have been soon trebled by the continuance of the system of general reception.

The magnitude of our buildings bore no proportion to the increase of our system. The Corporation directed by Parliament, extended its views to distant counties; and country Hospitals were established, in the ensuing year at Ackworth in Yorkshire; in 1758 in Kent, Shropshire and Buckinghamshire; and afterwards in Cheshire and at Barnet; with large rolls of county Governors, and county Committees, for the management of these numerous subordinate establishments.

A

A Charity so boundless and undistinguishing, and so unnecessarily varied from its original institution, could not but be attended with ill consequences. The scite of the Hospital was in many instances converted into a burying ground; and parental care, though perhaps it would not have deserted an healthy or hopeful child, carried the diseased and expiring infant, in some instances almost stripped of its cloathing, to take the chance of a change of air and situation, and of the efforts of medical skill and care: and, failing those, to receive the certainty of a decent interment. So far extended was this practice, a practice that has done infinite prejudice to the character of the Hospital, that I have been informed by a late respectable and active Governor, that there were many instances in which the child received at the gate, did not live to be carried to the wards of the Hospital.

There was another species of abuse—Parish officers, in some instances by fraud, and in others by force, had sent in the children of poor parishioners, some from a great distance, in order to secure the parish against the risk of future charges.—The children were immediately

dately returned to their parents; and the criminals, for they deserved no better name, prosecuted to conviction and punishment, at the expence of the Charity.

By the present practice of the * Hospital, something more than the mere necessity of the mother

* Some short account may probably be wished of the present management of the children.—Preparatory to the infant's reception, the appropriate day for which is Saturday, a wet-nurse, if necessary, is sent for from the country. She receives the child, and, after it has been christened at chapel the next day, she conveys it home, where it remains with her, under the care of the inspectress or inspector of the district, till 4 or 5 years old; at this age they are generally returned to the Hospital, and inoculated. They then go into the schools, are employed, and educated in strict observance of religious duties and of early and regular hours. The boys and girls are kept entirely separate; the girls under their mistresses; by whom, as soon as their little hands are capable, they are taught to knit, and afterwards needlework and reading; the elder girls are instructed in household work, being employed to assist as servants in and about the eastern wing of the Hospital. The boys are taught reading, writing, and accounts; they work in the garden, and assist as servants in their own (the western) wing, and in cleaning the court yard and chapel. At 12 or 13 the boys are put out apprentices;

mother and * desertion of the father is requisite. The previous good character of the mother is enquired into, and this important circumstance is ascertained, that the reception of the child, together with the secrecy observed as to the situation and misfortune of the mother, will be attended by the probable consequence of restoring her to a course of virtue, and placing her in a proper service, or in some other

tices ; and at 14 or 15 the girls ; whose apprenticeship is often delayed by the greater difficulty that attends the procuring for their sex proper and unexceptionable services in London.—It may be averred, and I speak from the most pleasing experience, that a happier, more healthy, or more innocent collection of beings does not exist in the world, than is to be found within the walls of the Foundling Hospital.

* It is generally required to be ascertained, that proper endeavours have been taken to subject the father to the expence of providing for the child. This however is sometimes liable to evasion and misrepresentation, notwithstanding the utmost care. This would in a great measure be prevented, if in some of these cases of desertion, a regular order of bastardy could be previously made ; and in the event of the father's return and of his being of sufficient ability, the Hospital was empowered to recover a limited sum from the father, towards the maintenance of the child.

other way of obtaining an honest livelihood. By these precautions an evil consequence is prevented, which, it must be allowed, during the continuance of parliamentary grants (a period in which the plan of the Charity was entirely changed) did attend the indiscriminate admission of children into the Hospital;—the increase of prostitution, by the extreme facility of providing for the produce of it. But at the same time when we consider, how many deserted infants were received into the Foundling at this period, it is impossible not to deduce this truth, that numbers of infants have perished in this country, both before and since that period, for want of the public care. And it is more than a mere probability, that, of the 4400 * children which (of those admitted at this time) were afterwards apprenticed and placed out in the world, the greater number must have been lost in their infancy, but for their reception into this Hospital.

The

* Of these the greater part were apprenticed to husbandry, or in other country situations.—It were to be wished, that more of the girls could be placed in proper services in the country; especially if those services could be obtained on the recommendation of the inspectresses.

The inconveniencies, which attended the unmanageable magnitude of the establishment, drew the attention of Parliament in April 1759; when the House of Commons expressed itself strongly against the practice of conveying children from distant situations to the Foundling Hospital. In the next session an enquiry was instituted, and, on the 8th of February 1760, the House of Commons resolved, that the general admission of all children, indiscriminately, under a certain age, into the Hospital, to be maintained there at the public expence, had been attended with many evil consequences, and that it be discontinued. The House at the same time, ordered an estimate of the expence of maintaining those already in the Hospital, up to the 31st of December 1760.

The Governors of the Hospital, on the next day, came to a resolution to continue to execute the purposes for which they were incorporated, so far as they were, or should be enabled by law so to do, not doubting but Parliament would enable them to support all such children as they had received; or should receive, in obedience to the resolutions of Parliament.

In

In this confidence they were not deceived. The sums which Parliament granted to them, during the next ten years, were very considerable; though possibly not adequate to the expence, to which the new system had subjected them. There were, at this time, above 6000 children on the * establishment; almost all of them

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* The following is a list of the number of children on the establishment, exclusive of parish children, at the end of every year, from the year 1752; before which time the accounts of them were not regularly kept.— On account of the circumstance of a greater number of children having been maintained from 1780 to 1790, than the funds were adequate to, the number has been since necessarily diminished. The improvement however of the revenue of the Charity, by building leases, will enable the Corporation to encrease the number again very considerably.

1752	559	1763	5171
3	587	4	5031
4	600	5	4619
5	611	6	4303
6	1764	7	3794
7	3947	8	2538
8	4568	9	1141
9	6002	1770	595
1760	6068	1	498
1	5615	2	429
2	5369	3	410

1774

them under five years of age. Six years passed before the number was reduced so low as 4300; and it was not till after the year 1769 that, by apprenticing all who could be placed out, they were reduced below 1000.—The average number of children, during the period of those ten years, was rather above 4300; the current expence of which, could not, upon the whole, be less than 35,000l. a year.

The Corporation not only did not abandon the infants it had received, but in the ensuing spring, and in several succeeding years, opened its gates to the orphans of * soldiers who had fallen

1774	385	1785	616
5	377	6	603
6	425	7	549
7	448	8	509
8	482	9	450
9	497	1790	407
1780	532	1	364
1	577	2	344
2	623	3	332
3	609	4	318
4	610		

* The greater part of those, admitted at this time, had been made orphans by the battle of Minden. It is

fallen in the German war. The ages of those admitted were from four to twelve years. At the same time the Court came to a resolution that if, at any future time, an application should be made for the reception of any other children, in the same or other similar circumstances of distress, the general Committee should be empowered to receive so many of such children as they should think proper, their ages not exceeding five years; a limitation which, upon a further reception of orphans of soldiers in July 1761, was done away, and the Committee empowered to receive such orphan or otherwise deserted children, whether of soldiers or sailors, although the age should exceed five years, the number and particular circumstances of such

is hardly possible for the mind not to recur to the feeling and beautiful lines of Langhorne.

“ Cold on Canadian hills, or *Minden’s* plain,
“ Perhaps that parent mourn’d her soldier slain ;
“ Bent o’er her babe, her eye dissolv’d in dew,
“ The big drops mingling with the milk he drew,
“ Gave the sad presage of his future years,
“ The child of misery, baptiz’d in tears.”

children being specially reported to the next general Court*.

Of so large a number of children, as had been admitted, it could not be hoped that all would be capable of being placed out, as apprentices, in the world. Some unfortunate instances of imbecility of body, or mind, were to be expected.—They still remain in the Hospital, as comfortable and useful as their capacities will allow.—Besides this, the magnitude of the scale and system of the establishment, during the period of the parliamentary grants, notwithstanding all the economy since adopted, has entailed a considerable expence on the Charity: and, what has been much felt, the source of private donations has been considerably diminished from the time, and in consequence, of parliamentary interference.—We must not therefore wonder that, for a series of years, it should have suffered a diminution of income and property; and should have been generally, though unfairly, aspersed for that waste of capital, which,

* See the Minutes of the General Court, 14th May, 1760, 1st July, 1761, 30th Dec. 1761, and 30th March, 1763.

without

without driving from its walls a number of helpless objects, could not have been prevented.—The assertion of general abuses, in the management of a public trust, is made with ease; but not repelled without trouble and detail, even if the public attention can be drawn to it; and I am sorry to add, is very willingly advanced, or credited, by many, who too easily admit private motives to influence the conduct of public concerns.

The Governors, without giving up the original object of their institution, adopted and pursued a steady and regular plan of *economy; and, as soon as it was practicable, apprenticed out the children, and discontinued and disposed

* It was probably one of the consequences of this system of economy, that a custom has ceased, (which had prevailed and had been authorized by one of the regulations of the Hospital) of making a present to the children of the Hospital, at the expiration of their apprenticeship, in case of testimonials of good behaviour. This practice might be renewed with very good effect on the morals and conduct of the children; and the public appearance in the chapel, of those who had distinguished themselves by their good behaviour, might operate as an incentive and example to the other children.

of the country hospitals; reducing their establishment, as far as could be done, to what their permanent and contingent income was adequate to. Indeed it is impossible to refer to the minutes of the general Courts, or of their Committees, during this or any period of the history of the Corporation, without feeling how providentially the succession of benevolent care and attention, has been, in every part of that history, directed to the essential objects of the Charity.

In addition to a general plan of retrenchment and economy, the attention of the Governors was, at this time, first directed to the improvement of revenue, which the Corporation might derive from granting building leases, of such part of the estate purchased of Lord Salisbury, as was not wanted for the immediate accommodation of the Hospital; and, in June 1764, the land in the south front of the Hospital was advertised to be let on a building lease. For want, however, of proper arrangements, the measure was then unsuccessful: and nothing further appears to have been done until May 1775; when a resolution was passed, that the General Committee should be empowered to receive proposals,

posals, treat, and agree, for letting on one or more building leases, for any term not exceeding ninety-nine years, the land on the south side of the private road leading into Gray's Inn Lane.

This resolution, however, was soon after rescinded ; and the further consideration of the scheme of building was postponed till the leases of the Rugby charity were expired, or near expiring ; or the treaty, of exchanging ground with that Trust, could be settled. On this account the improvement of the Hospital estate was deferred for some years ; at least no general system was adopted : the few leases granted before 1789 (the whole rents reserved on which amounted only to 81*l.* 3*s.*) being rather to be considered as matters of personal accommodation to individuals, than as part of a general plan of increasing the funds of the Charity.— When, however, the period of maturity for the agreement with the Rugby trust arrived, it appeared that no arrangement could be made with that *rival* property : and, in May 1786, the consideration of any exchange of land with that Charity, was, after a reference to a Special Committee, indefinitely postponed.

The increase of the income, arising from the Chapel, was an object of the next importance in point of revenue; and in this the Charity was more early in its success. The General Committee, in order to ensure a maintenance to a blind boy of the hospital, had in 1758 been induced to give directions for his being regularly instructed in music, at the expence of the Charity: a similar order was made in 1768; and again in 1771; and the seeds of benevolence in these, as in most instances, have been returned with tenfold produce into the bosom of the Charity; for the three persons so * instructed

have

* The orders for the instruction of those three persons are subjoined, with a view of reminding the conductors of the Charity, how honourably this example of benevolence has been repaid by the gratitude and services of the objects of that benevolence; and how proper it will be that these orders should be occasionally adopted as precedents.

“ General Committee, 28th March, 1758.

“ Resolved, That Tom Grenville, a boy of this Hospital who is blind, be taught music by the assistant to the organist of the chapel of this Hospital, at the price of two guineas per quarter, for instructing him four times a week for the first quarter, and three times a week for the two next quarters.

“ 13th

have lived to contribute very abundantly, and with credit and advantage to themselves, to the funds on which their comfort and independence, and most probably their existence, have depended.

The

“ 13th May, 1760.

“ Mr. White acquaints the Committee, that the
“ person who was appointed to teach the blind boy,
“ used him with great severity, and neglected instruc-
“ ing him; and proposed Mr. Cook should be ap-
“ pointed to teach him in his place.

“ Resolved,

“ That the Treasurer be desired to agree with the
“ said Mr. Cook on the best terms he can.

“ 18th Nov. 1767.

“ Read a letter from Mr. Mynd to Lady Sophia
“ Egerton, together with a copy of an agreement of
“ the parishioners of Ross in Herefordshire, purport-
“ ing that the said parishioners had agreed to employ
“ Tom Grenville, who has been employed as an as-
“ sistant organist in the chapel of this Hospital, al-
“ lowing him 25l. a year for his service as organist
“ of the said parish of Ross.

“ Resolved,

“ That the thanks of this Committee be given
“ to Lady Sophia Egerton, for her protection and
“ the service done to the said Tom Grenville, and
“ that he shall be dispatched in a fortnight or three
“ weeks.

“ 10th

—The attention of the Governors to the management of the chapel, and to the instruction of the children in sacred music, has, from that time, been attended with great emolument to the Charity. From the annual sum of 37*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.* the whole receipt from the chapel in 1766, it had in 1776 increased to 340*l.* 15*s.* 3*d.* in 1786 to 881*l.* 4*s.* 1*d.* and in the last year (1795) to 1594*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.* to which, by the united labour and attention of some of the Governors, a considerable addition is expected still to be made.

The General Committee had, in 1771, made an arrangement for the reduction of the servants of the Hospital; and, in February 1773, the General Court appointed a Special Committee, to consider as to any practicable diminution of

“ 10th Feb. 1768.

“ Resolved,

“ That Mr. Cook, the organist, be employed to teach the blind boy, John Printer, music, at the salary of 12*l.* 12*s.* per annum, to commence from Christmas last.

“ 16th of October 1771.

“ Ordered,

“ That Mr. Philpot, the organist, do teach the blind girl, Blanch Thetford, music.”

the

the expences of the Hospital. The Committee* reported that any further reduction in the number of officers in the Hospital (who were then six in number, the Secretary, Steward, Apothecary, Matron, Clerk, and Schoolmaster) could not be made, unless by a consolidation of the functions of any two officers; a measure which the General Court did not then approve, but the trial of which was afterwards made in 1780, by uniting the appointment of Clerk and Steward in the person of Mr. Biggs. The consolidation was then of very short continuance. Since that time, however, the union of the two offices of Secretary and Steward has been made, and continues without any inconvenience, in the person of Mr. Merryweather. The number of servants in the Hospital had been reduced from fifty to thirty-two; in which number were included (that which is common to all public establishments) some aged persons, who having spent their best days in the laborious work of the house, remained there as an asylum; and (what is peculiar to the Foundling) several of those unfortunate persons, who had been taken

* See this report, and the resolutions on it in the Supplement, No. 4.

in during the period of general reception, and who, by reason of mental or bodily defects, were incapable of being placed out in the world; and could therefore render but a very imperfect service in the Hospital. This part of the establishment, and the expence of the kitchen garden, it was apprehended, could not be lessened. To diminish the charge of repairs, it was thought proper to employ a regular Surveyor; and the medicinal service of the Hospital was referred to future consideration.

The object of these sheets is to present a detail, possessing probably no other interest than what it derives from the subject, of the measures which have, at different periods, either been adopted or rejected by the founders and friends of the Charity; and to remind the Governors of the necessity of frequently recurring to first principles, and of correcting, with temper and attention, the defects and abuses which will attend the progress of every human establishment. A work of this kind, if prepared with any degree of industry, must have the merit of collecting together, for the convenience of the present and future Guardians of the Hospital, a considerable part of the experience and information

information of their predecessors. In this view many things, in themselves trifling, acquire an interest from situation and consequences.—Music had been a source of very considerable benefit to the Charity ; and, by the benevolence of Mr. Handel, very large sums had been added to the funds of the Corporation. In July 1774, Doctor Burney and Mr. Giardini presented to the General Court a plan for establishing a public music-school at the Hospital ; a plan which promised considerable, though no immediate, advantage to the Charity. The proposal was accepted ; a subscription roll opened for donations ; and a Special Committee appointed to arrange and execute the measure. An adjourned Court, however, was held that day fortnight, and the clause in the Act of Parliament read, authorizing the Corporation to detain and employ the children in any sort of *labour* or *manufacture* ; and it appearing to the General Court, that music was not either a labour or a manufacture, the plan was * rejected, as not warranted by the Act of Parliament.

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* This may be a proper subject for reconsideration. The scheme, as then offered, seems to have been chiefly exceptionable, because the projectors extended

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The infirmary of the Hospital had, by a resolution of June 1755, been directed to be placed in the western wing, at the south end of the upper floor. By subsequent resolutions different situations were appointed for it; and as is usual where there are various measures and various directions, without any fixed or particular attention to the subject, it had at length sunk into a low damp confined building, near the Hospital gate; destitute of convenience; incapable of separate accommodation for the sexes; and bidding defiance to medical skill, to restore the inhabitants to the free air and healthy apartments of the Hospital.—Hopeless labour is generally void of exertion. In the present instance, the unfavourable situa-

ed it too far. How far, cannot now be precisely stated, as the plan was returned to the projectors, and no copy kept.—A musical school within the Hospital, for the children incapable of any other means of livelihood, might, under proper limitations, prove a benefit to the funds of the Hospital, and a source of inestimable Charity; by giving comfort and independence to any of the Hospital children, whose sight may fail, and in some cases to children deprived of sight, the peculiarity of whose distress (like that of the blind orphan very lately admitted) may entitle them to the protection of the Charity.

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tion of the infirmary seems to have produced an extraordinary effect of inattention and want of cleanliness in those who had the care of it: and this, and the other evils attending the scite of the infirmary, being increased by two epidemical disorders in December 1789, the quarterly Court referred the whole to the investigation of the General Committee; the result of which was a systematic regulation as to the cleanliness, management, and diet of the children; which has been since very well observed:—the establishment of a regular visitation of the Hospital; and the restoration of the infirmary to its originally intended scite; a change which has operated as a charm on the sick list of the Hospital, and reduced it to half of its former average.

The great object of enquiring into the income and expenditure of the Hospital, from the time of the last parliamentary grant, was at the same time referred to a Special Committee of five Governors; who in June 1790, presented their * report on the subject to the general Court; and orders

* See No. 6 in the Supplement.

were

were made, in consequence, to bring the expen-
diture within the usual income.—

To the plan of re-establishing the finances, and perpetuating the funds of the Charity, by granting building leases, objections had always been made, which, for a series of years, had prevented the improvement of the Hospital estate.—The original price of that estate, containing fifty-six acres of land, purchased of the Earl of Salisbury in 1740, after allowing for his benevolence of £. 500, amounted to £. 6500. Of that land, nearly ten acres had been occupied by the scite and conveniences of the Hospital; the addition of as much more, in the areas of the squares and spaces immediately surrounding the Hospital, is the least quantity that has ever been proposed to be left uncovered by buildings: so that the Hospital, in any event, was to stand in the centre of twenty acres of ground. From the remaining thirty-six acres, the zeal and sanguine hopes of some of the Governors had induced them to expect to secure to the Charity an annual income, not much inferior to the original price of the fee simple of the whole estate. Reasons, however, had always occurred, to prevent the

Charity

Charity receiving the benefit of this addition to its funds; reasons, which though they would not have influenced for a moment in the concerns of an individual, were nevertheless said to be intitled to weight with the guardians of a public trust, and which, for a succession of years, continued to have the effect of deferring the improvement of the Corporation estate. However, in May 1785, the Governors being alarmed by the circumstance of the expences of the Hospital having for some time exceeded the income, a Committee of enquiry was appointed; and, in March 1786, after a pause of above ten years, the consideration of the improvement of their estate was resumed; and a special Committee directed to make a survey of the ground belonging to the Corporation, and to recommend some plan of building thereon to the general Court. In March 1787, the general Committee was empowered to receive proposals, for taking any part of the Hospital land on building leases: a power that was recalled by the next Court; which resolved, that "to erect any building on the lands belonging to the Hospital on which no buildings were then erected, by which a free and open circulation

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“ of air was then enjoyed by the children of the
“ Hospital, would be detrimental to their health,
“ and contrary to the original institution of the
“ Charity.”

The authors of this resolution seem to have presumed, that an original intention of using, or not using, brick and mortar, had made part of the fundamental constitution of the Charity; and, in the centre of a dry and elevated situation of twenty acres of ground, trembled for the noxious influence of confined air on the health of the children. The resolution, however, met the fate it deserved. It was rescinded at the next meeting; and, in December 1787, it was resolved that such part of the estate, as laid south of, and adjoining to, the road leading from the gates of the Hospital to Gray's-Inn-Lane, should be let on building leases: and the general Committee was desired to advertise the same; and to lay all proposals, which they should receive relating thereto, before the next Court. —This was confirmed in March 1788: and the ground of the Hospital was then ordered to be advertised generally, to be let on building leases, and the most speedy and effectual measures to be taken, for letting the same.

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In April 1789, with a view of proceeding to build on the western part of the estate, a special Committee was appointed to wait on the Duke of Bedford, and to request his assistance, in promoting the interest of the Charity in their building plan, by permitting openings into his private road. To this no favourable answer being obtained, the general Committee was in December 1789 desired to proceed, with all possible dispatch, in causing the eastern part of the Hospital land to be staked out; and was empowered to treat with any persons who should be inclined to take any part of the ground on building leases.

The experience of fifteen years had shewn the impracticability of executing this plan of improving the funds of the Charity, whilst a measure, complicated and difficult in itself, and requiring a fixed and continued attention, was to be carried into effect by a numerous and fluctuating body. It was therefore found necessary to intrust the conduct of it to a select Committee of five persons; to whom, in June 1790, it was referred, to take such steps as should appear necessary, for carrying into execution

cution the resolutions of the Corporation, for letting the land adjoining to the Hospital on building leases; and to report their proceedings to the next Christmas Court.

The building Committee, with the aid of Mr. Cockerell, prepared a general and very full* report on the subject; and (in case of the success of the measure) stated the probable accession of ground rents at the annual sum of at least 4000*l.* What has been since let amounts to 2008*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.* a year, making, with the 81*l.* 3*s.* before let, the net rental of 2089*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.*—If the other part of the land can be as successfully disposed of, the whole will produce a clear ground rent of above 4000*l.* a year.

At a special Court, held on the 26th of January 1791, a plan, prepared by Mr. Merryweather, the Secretary of the Hospital, and possessing considerable merit, was adopted for the proposed buildings; in which the opening of Queen-square, though with some diminution in the amount of the expected ground

* See No. 7 in the Supplement.

rents,

rent, was proposed to be continued of the same width over the estate; a benefit which, after every effort of persuasion, the proprietors of that square * have declined to accept.

In June 1791 the building Committee made their first report of any land let by them. The progress since that time has been regular and continued. In December 1794, they had the satisfaction of reporting to the Court the success of their treaty with the Duke of Bedford, for four openings into his road at the north end of Southampton-row. The confirmation of this agreement was carried only by

* The refusal of the ground landlord of Queen-square, to consent to the union of that square with the Foundling estate, was reported to the general Court in March 1791. The desire, however, of continuing the opening of Queen-square was not given up till December 1793; when an advantageous proposal being made for the ground lying north of Queen-square, and a meeting of the inhabitants of the square, in consequence of a message from the building Committee, having produced no alteration of opinion or inclination on the subject, the ground was at length let to Mr. Burton, on a plan as favourable as well could be, to the adjoining square.

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a small majority. Its effect was wholly to remove the grand objection to building on the Hospital estate;—its possessing no thoroughfare, nor any immediate communication with the western part of the town.

Of the ground rents of the land already let, amounting to 2089*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* there is already (besides the rent now received for brick earth and gravel, which has been from 600*l.* to 800*l.* a year) the annual amount of 976*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.* in a course of actual receipt; and the remaining 1113*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* will commence, according to the usual allowances on building leases, part of it (294*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*) before the end of the present year, and the rest in the course of the five next years.—To this increase of rental it is no inconsiderable addition, that the obstacles, to the further progress of improvement, are now removed: and that the expences, attending the measure, are nearly, if not entirely, defrayed by the rents and profits already received.—

The opening the gates of the Hospital, to the orphan and necessitous children of soldiers and sailors, is a measure not unprecedented in the history of the Charity; but though the general Court

Court exercised a discretion of admitting them even to the age of twelve years, yet, by a resolution of the 1st of July 1761, the Committee was restricted from receiving any such child above the age of five years; except, as it was soon after modified, in particular cases, which the Committee should think fit to make the subject of a special report.

In January 1794, a Court was summoned for the consideration of this subject; and it was resolved, that "admitting into the Hospital the exposed and necessitous children of soldiers and seamen, who are, have been, or shall be, employed in the service of their country, during the present war, will be productive of considerable advantages to the public; by holding out an encouragement to the brave and meritorious subjects engaged in the public service, and securing an object of great importance to the community at all times, but particularly at present; viz. the preserving the lives of, and training up in the habits of industry, virtue, and religion, infants in the inferior classes of society."— And the general Committee was authorized to admit

admit as many such children, not exceeding five years of age, as " the funds of the Charity, " together with any additional aids that may " be furnished by the liberality of the public, " will enable them to maintain, consistent with " a proper degree of attention to the other " deserving objects of the Charity."

It were much to be wished, that this wise and benevolent resolution could be carried to a greater extent, and with more effect, than it has yet been; and that a part of the benefit of the increasing funds of the Hospital (so far as may be done without injustice to other objects) should be permanently fixed, as the peculiar right of the children of the defenders of their country: For, exclusive of national and general views, and whether the *merit* or the *necessity* of the case is to be the subject of consideration, no child can have a better title to admittance into a national establishment.—It is the observation of a very eminent political writer, Dr. Adam Smith, when he is speaking of soldiers marriages, that " So far from recruiting " their regiment, they have never been able to " supply it with drums and fifes, from all the
" soldiers

" soldiers children that were born in it. A
" greater number of fine children, however,
" is seldom seen any where than about a bar-
" rack of soldiers. Very few of them, it
" seems, arrive at the age of thirteen or four-
" teen."

There is certainly no general situation, in which human nature has, in the early period of life, a more severe and unequal contest for preservation.—But there is another benefit of our Charity, to a participation of which the situation of a soldier's child gives it the strongest claim;—the advantage of a virtuous and religious education. For, pass the age of infancy;—suppose a contest for existence, at first apparently hopeless, to be finally determined in favour of the child:—this nursing of the camp can have little or no advantage of example or instruction; but is unfortunately contaminated by the vices of a soldier, before he is capable of his virtues. Whether therefore the *merit* and *situation* of the *parent*, or the *hopes* and *welfare* of the *child*, are to be considered, it appears to me that infants of soldiers, whose parents are in the actual service of their country, have, of all claims, one of the strongest, to admittance into the

Foundling Hospital ;—the parent retaining, as in other cases, the power of reclaiming the child, whenever, on account of the termination of the war, of success or advancement in life, or any other circumstance, he shall be desirous and capable of maintaining it.

What has been said is applied merely to infants, whose parents are *living* in the service of their country. But for the child, whose father—or perhaps both his parents have *perished* in the field ;—his settlement and connections distant or unknown ;—where can the poor orphan look for preservation and instruction, but to some national establishment, like the Foundling Hospital ? If this is not an **EXPOSED AND DESERTED CHILD**, intitled by its own *distress*, and its father's *services*, to the peculiar protection of its country, it should seem that no such case can exist.

I am aware, that it may be objected, that some of these children may not come precisely within the scope of the institution ; and that the funds of the charity are not adequate to all the objects of this class, that might offer in addition to these, which are the subjects of ordinary relief.

relief. These, however, are only objections to its being extended to a degree commensurate with our wishes; and the reply is, that, if the whole cannot be done, let it be done in part; and let a portion of that income, which we have been labouring to increase, be appropriated to so excellent a purpose. If, in aid of our present endeavours, the public or individual benevolence comes forward, and the directors of any other fund, formed for similar purposes, shall think proper to lend their assistance, the system may very soon be extended, as far as will be necessary.

The object of the foregoing detail will be answered, if it contribute in any degree to the better management of the Charity,—to the systematic improvement of its funds,—and to a wise and practicable economy in the application of them; so as to make them a benefit both to the nation, and to the individuals of which it is composed.—In this labour let the strenuous exertions of every one be united; and the blessing of him, that was ready to perish, shall come upon them.

Foundling, 26 March 1796.



